

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 28

NEWSWEEK
19 October 1981

'An Act of Infamy'

Anwar Sadat loved the pageantry of a military parade. He was so certain of the loyalty of his troops that on parade days he often told his security guards "Please go away—I am with my children." On the eighth anniversary of his surprise attack on Israel last week, Sadat was presiding over an extravagant military show in Cairo when a junior lieutenant in crisp khakis and blue beret stepped from a truck and walked toward him. Sadat rose, expecting a salute. Instead, the young officer tossed a grenade. A band of accomplices then scrambled from the back of the truck, flinging concussion and fragmentation grenades and firing submachine guns. Sadat gasped and fell, mortally wounded, in a bloody jumble of overturned chairs.

The assassination left the Mideast facing a dangerous political void, and it left the world without one of the few leaders whose bold imagination and personal courage seemed to have made a difference to history. Americans, in particular, felt a sharp sense of loss. "You can count on me," Sadat had told Reagan only last August. To a nation that had learned to count on him, the murder brought back a flood of images: Sadat bear-hugging Henry Kissinger in the days of shuttle diplomacy; Sadat laughing with Golda Meir on his historic trip to Jerusalem; Sadat, hands triple clenched with Jimmy Carter and Menachem Begin after the exuberant descent from Camp David. Stepping out on the North Portico of the White House, Ronald Reagan, misty-eyed, mourned him. "Anwar Sadat was admired and loved by the people of America," Reagan said. "His death today, an act of infamy, cowardly infamy, fills us with horror."

For security reasons, Reagan did not attend Sadat's funeral. Instead, he invited Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, the other three presidents who had worked with Sadat through the years, to represent the United States in a delegation led by Secretary of State Alexander Haig. In Cairo, the mourners joined French President François Mitterrand, Britain's Prince Charles, West Germany's Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and other dignitaries from the West. Amid tight security, a caisson drawn by six horses bore Sadat's casket 900 yards to a sarcophagus in Egypt's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier—directly opposite the reviewing stand in which he died. Menachem Begin was there for the funeral. But among the Arab states, only the Sudan, Oman and Somalia sent representatives. Other Arab leaders stayed home in one final rebuke for Sadat's lonely peace with Israel.

Radical Pressure: The assassination cost Israel its only friend in the Arab world. The immediate question was whether Sadat's entente with Israel would survive him, or whether his handpicked successor, Hosni Mubarak, 53, would yield to the pressure of radical Arabs and the more friendly persuasion of Saudi Arabia. Mubarak pledged that Egypt would proceed down the track Sadat had cleared. "Camp David is Camp David," he told *NEWSWEEK*. "We are going to respect our word, the peace treaty and normalization." In Jerusalem, Begin lamented Sadat's "criminal assassination." "The peace process... will continue, as we know President

jubilant Arab shopkeepers passed out candy. In Beirut, led militiamen honked car horns and fired automatic rifles into the air. In Tripoli, crowds waving the green flag of Libya danced in the streets, in what one Western envoy called "ghastly jubilation."

Everyone studied Mubarak anxiously. In Cairo, the Egyptian Parliament formally nominated him for President by a vote of 330-0, clearing the way for his official election in a pro-national referendum early this week. Mubarak's interim government moved quickly to maintain order, imposing a one-year state of emergency and ordering the arrest and interrogation of a number of leftists and radical Islamic fundamentalists. In Assiut, 240 miles south of Cairo, religious fundamentalists opened fire on a police building, killing two officers and leaving scores of others dead and wounded in a 30-hour battle. Later, gunmen in a speeding automobile raked a police station in Cairo itself, killing at least one officer.

Invitation to Washington: Mubarak's first days on the job reassured Washington. In an effort to cement the relations, Reagan invited the new Egyptian President to visit the United States next year. Mubarak and Begin also agreed to hold a summit of their own. But Sadat's murder further exposed the vulnerability of a U.S. Mideast policy that has relied heavily on understanding with such vulnerable autocrats as the Shah of Iran, President

Mohammed Zia ul-Haq of Pakistan and the Saudi royal family. The man in Cairo could only cast doubt over the already tattered prospects of the Palestinian autonomy talks between Egypt and Israel and over Sadat's final withdrawal from the desert, scheduled for next April. It further clouded the debate in Congress over whether to sell sophisticated AWACS radar planes to Saudi Arabia: the Administration conceded that Sadat's death meant that it was more important than ever to

cate and bolster the Saudis; opponents said the murder argued more powerfully for keeping sensitive American military technology out of a region of newly demonstrated instability.

The assassination was a nightmare that U.S. officials had dreaded. Over the years, the United States had contributed nearly \$25 million toward Sadat's security. Beginning in 1974, the Secret Service had trained Egyptian security men in skills ranging from evasive driving to crowd control. In 1974 Richard Nixon gave Sadat a \$2 million Sikorsky CH-53E armored helicopter. Sadat praised its quiet ride during a flight with Nixon over The Central Intelligence Agency chipped in advanced communications equipment designed to protect messages between Sadat's bodyguards against interception by other Egyptian military and police forces. Last year Jimmy Carter dispatched an AWACS from Saudi Arabia to scan the skies and warn Sadat of any challenges from Libyan fighters during one of the Egyptian President's trips to the Sudan.

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